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This unit is intended to give ninth-grade students a brief survey of the changes in the study of language from the time of the Greeks to the present. Organized to proceed from the teacher's introduction of a subject to class examination and discussion of an excerpt from a grammarian's work, the unit focuses on the belief that a grammarian's methods, values, symbols, and classifications reflect the age in which he lives and the purposes for which he works. The survey begins by examining excerpts from Aristotle and Dionysius Thrax to show the Greek grammarian's concern for logic and rhetorical analysis. Next, the 18th-century desire for the purification and preservation of language is revealed by excerpts from Dr. Johnson, Robert Lowth, and others. Nineteenth-century historical and comparative studies are represented by excerpts from T. R. Lounsbury and Fitzedward Hall, while the concern of the Victorian middle classes for "proper usage" is illustrated by excerpts from "McGuffey's Readers." Current interest in transformational theory is discussed with references to the work of Robert S. Wachal and Noam Chomsky. An appendix includes a review sheet and culminating activities for the unit. (JS)

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UNIT 903

Approaches To Grammar

Grade Nine

TE 001 272

CAUTIONARY NOTE

These materials are for experimental use by Project English fellows and their associates who contributed to their development.

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UNIT 903 APPROACHES TO GRAMMAR

The purpose of this unit is to give the student a brief survey of the changes in the study of language from the time of the Greeks to the present. The focus is on the fact that the grammarian (or, in a broader sense, the student of language) is a product of his age; his methods, values, symbols, classifications, etc., reflect the values of the age in which he lives and the purposes for which he works. What is valued in one age may not be valued in the next; therefore, while all the classifications of the past constitute the fund of knowledge which we of the present have to draw on, we must, in order to use this knowledge for our own needs and purposes, examine the methodology and assumptions upon which the systematizer rested his conclusions. That is, we cannot consider all our knowledge about language to have been drawn from one source, but from many different sources, each of which must be viewed in the light of two sets of values--the compiler's and our own. If some of the assumptions of other compilers seem strange to us, we might recall that ours would seem as strange to him, though this does not necessarily enhance the value of his work for our own purposes.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS UNIT

Unit 903 is organized to proceed from teacher introduction to excerpt to question and discussion periods. Depending on the length of the time to be devoted to the unit, the teacher may wish to use the suggestions placed at the end of the unit either as intermediate steps in the development of the unit or as culminating activities. No one class will ordinarily be equipped to make use of all the suggestions, or even, perhaps, of all the excerpts. The abilities of the members of the class should be a primary consideration while deciding how much or how little of the material should be used and how many of the culminating activities ought to be required and which should be optional or omitted. This particularly true of the closing section which treats the emergence of transformational grammar. Students who have had no exposure to PE Units 704, 705, 803, and 804 should probably avoid this section.

NOTE: The material to the right might be organized in handout form or, if the teacher wishes, presented in lecture form.

LECTURE OR HANDOUT

Man is marked by an intense desire to organize his world in some satisfying way. As a child you may have stuffed your pockets with rocks and then later organized them in all sorts of curious ways. You may have organized them by color, by size, by texture, or even by which ones reminded you of animals and which did not. Those of you who presently collect stamps, coins, model planes, or cars are still in the process of organizing some part of the world in a way that is satisfying to you. There are, of course, all sorts of things and ideas to organize--some simple and some very complex.

What follows is the attempt of a man named Ptolemy to organize or systematize a part of his existence to his satisfaction. Ptolemy was one of the earliest astronomers; his workd dates to the first century A.D. As you will see, he had some problems with his system.

NOTE: This should be passed out to each student in some form. It might be well to read the paragraph to the class since the language is somewhat involved. The most important section is in Proposition 5: "That The Earth Is In The Middle of The Heavens."

TO BE READ ALOUD

(From Ptolemy's The Almagest - Great Books Volume 16, p. 9)

NOTE: Able students might profit from contact with The Almagest. The theory looks so sure since it is larded with copius geometric proofs. This should illustrate how very wrong a very sincere effort may be. It is contained in Great Books - Volume 16.

(drawing of Ptolemy's theory)

NOTE: The drawing should be copied on the chalkboard.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is Ptolemy attempting to systematize?

   (The heavens.)

2. What is wrong with Ptolemy's system?

   (Earth centered-major error.)

3. It is easy to see how this might happen. Explain.

   (Observation by a man on earth would seem to suggest that everything revolved around the earth--the sun seems to go in a circle as does the moon. The stars presented some problems to Ptolemy since they did not behave quite like the sun and moon.)

NOTE: Some students might be led to considerations of the ego-centrism suggested by an earth centered universe. It is quite suitable to Ptolemy's time.

4. What do you suppose Ptolemy's method involved?

   (No telescope--no concept of space--nothing but the observations of men which seemed to point toward an earth centered universe.)

NOTE: The underlined statement is critical. Discussion and development of this point is directly related to the basic premises this discussion should establish; i.e. that man must systematize in order to comprehend his existence, that he systematizes in terms of his era and purpose, that our impression of a past culture is the product of the systematizations of that culture and that a culture's systematizations must be judged in the frame of its time and purpose.

5. How do these methods contrast with those of today's scientists?

   (More hardware--more knowledge of other's systems--more methods of proof available.)

6. Was Ptolemy's theory sensible in terms of his time?

   (Yes--because of the limitations of his world in terms of knowldege, method, etc.)

7. What would happen if we launched a Mars probe using Ptolemy's theory?

   (It would land in the Chicago Loop!)

TRANSITION

So man has systematized various parts of his experience for various reasons. The doctor systematizes the nature and function of the human body so that he might keep it healthy; the electrician systematizes the electrical needs of a house so that he can efficiently wire it.

For the next few days we are going to look at man's attempt to systematize something very basic and important--his language. Let us go back again to the land and time of Ptolemy and find out what we can of some of man's first attempts to deal with the system called language.

FOR THE TEACHER:

The teacher should read pp. 234-238 from H. I. Marrou's A History of Education in Antiquity. Unless one is aware of the nature of early Greek "grammar" and its pre-eminent concern with matters of logic and rhetorical analysis, the opening sections of this unit will be difficulty to handle. This selection is recommended with this in mind. Certain students also might profit from work with sections of this piece. A particularly able student might be able to present an oral summary of the role and nature of grammar in early Greek education.

NOTE: This reading is intended as the impetus for some discussion of the Greek philosophers, their concerns and their methods. Points needing stress or amplification are noted. Discussion of these points would occur whenever deemed efficient.

NOTE: The concept of Western Civilization may need attention. If the student is not aware of this heritage of ideas and ideals there will be little sense in spending time with the Greeks.

READING 1

Several centuries before the birth of Christ a handful of men dwelling in a land no larger than the state of New York gave serious thought to the world about them. Their thinking was so profound and their ideas so curious that the world has never been the same because of them. These men and their thoughts are particularly important to you for you live in the culture these ideas helped to produce. Some of you are, no doubt, aware that these men were Greek. You may also know that these men and their ideas were the beginning of Western Civilization and that you are one of the more recent additions to the culture these men helped begin. Should you give thought today to matters of science, art, politics, language or a number of other subjects, you would surely owe some of what you think to men such as Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato or Aristotle.

It is rather difficult to describe these men in contemporary terms. In fact a man such as Socrates would perplex us should he suddenly appear in our midst. People would be surprised to find that he has no particular job and, even worse, he would seem to prefer things this way. What he would spend his time doing might even irritate some people, for Socrates had a habit of asking questions about all sorts of things--difficult questions that make you think. Per--haps the closest you may come to someone like Socrates is the teacher, an excellent one usually, who asks those questions that make you think until suddenly you find you know something you didn't before. This way of teaching is even called the Socratic method. But what does all this have to do with grammar? Read on, perhaps that can be made clear.

NOTE: The rather aloof life these men led seems related to the theories they proposed. The contrast of today's intelli-gentsia and their more intimate contact with the world about them may be worth developing at this point.

These men were first of all philosophers. They were engaged in the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, something that very few are doing today. What they dealt with was surprisingly varied. Art, politics, science, logic, and literature were thoroughly investigated and discussed. Theories were developed that are, in some instances, surprisingly modern. You have heard and read a great deal about the atom, but you may not be aware that a man named Democritus proposed anatomic theory before

NOTE: Further development of Greek borrowings, particularly in the areas of science and government, would be profitable here.

Christ walked the earth. Even the word "atom" is a borrowing from the Greek language. The central concern of these men was the search for reality--the truth of things. Their method was to observe and then postulate or theorize on the basis of their observations. Nothing pleased the Greek philosopher more than the production of a balanced and logical explanation for some aspect of man's experience.

NOTE: This presents an efficient situation for some discussion of the culture-language bond.

One of man's obviously significant experience was language. The Greek philosopher could not ignore the matter of language whether he wanted to or not. He was aware, as you should be, that language gets mixed up in anything involving man. So, though the philosopher's primary concern was the search for reality or truth, he could not help but consider language in his search. As a result, men such as Plato and Aristotle were among the first grammarians of Western Civilization. Some of the things they observed about language and its operation are being taught today with little alteration. Some of their ideas about language, however, would not be accepted today. Here, for instance, is Aristotle's advice regarding the achievement of clarity in writing: "Clearness is secured through the use of name-words (nouns and adjectives) and verbs that are current terms." Notice that the purpose of this advice is "truth in writing" but the advice is in grammatical terms. What do you think Aristotle meant by "current terms"? Does this make sense today?

NOTE: Some help may be needed in handling these quotes. Discussion of points raised is important and should not be ignored. "Current" in this context is the opposite of archaic.

Aristotle discusses the nature of language in these terms: "Spoken words are the symbols of mental experience and written words are the symbols of spoken words. Just as all men have not the same writing, so all men have not the same speech sounds, but the mental experience, which these directly symbolize, are the same for all, as also are those things of which our experience are the images. As there are in the mind thoughts which do not involve truth or falsity, and also those which must be either true or false, so it is in speech. For truth and falsity imply combination and separation. Nouns and verbs, provided nothing is added, are like thoughts without combination or separation; 'man' and 'white' as isolated terms, are not yet either false or true." Notice how sure and positive this all sounds. Yet if you are observant, you will find a flaw in what Aristotle has to say. Can you find it? Notice again the concern with "truth" or "falsity" of the situation.

But the concern of the Greek philosopher was not the development of a grammar of their language. They discussed grammar only in the process of giving advice as to the effective use of language in the search for "truth" and "reality." Their writings on grammar appear all through discussions centered on other things. So, until the first century B. C., there was no single statement of the grammar of Greece.

At this time a feeling persisted in the minds of some Greeks that their golden age of reason and purity was slipping away. One of the areas in which this seemed apparent was the use of language. It was felt that some definition or description of "good" language was needed. For this purpose a man named Dionysius Thrax consolidated the ideas about grammar from the Greek philosophers, added a few of his own and wrote the first significant grammar of Greek. Thrax spent little time speculating about the "reality" or "truth" of things. His concern was not philosophical but grammatical. Thrax's book was well received and became the standard grammar of Greek. The Romans, being notable *borrowers of Greek* methods and ideas, took Thrax's grammar and, with minor revisions, used it as a grammar of Latin. Thrax's grammar was modified slightly through the years and taught as the standard grammar of a number of languages--including English--into the eighteenth century.

NOTE: The following questions are to be used in whatever fashion suits the situation. Assignments could be made on the basis of some of these. Some might be ignored if the concept they were designed to implement was already clear to the student. Some might be expanded into projects if the teacher so desired.

SAMPLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Here are some excerpts from Thrax's grammar. Read them carefully and do as you are asked with the questions that follow each excerpt.

"GRAMMAR IS THE EMPIRICAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE LANGUAGE OF POETS AND PROSE-WRITERS AS GENERALLY CURRENT."

1. Check the meaning of "empirical" in a dictionary. Is Thrax's method different than that of the philosophers?
(If the student can find out what "empirical"means they should be aware that the method of analysis Thrax-philosophers is essentially the same.)

2. Is this a grammar of spoken or written language? What makes you say that?
(This is a grammar of writing--the reference to poets and prose-writers makes this clear.)

3. This grammar was intended to preserve good Greek literature and language. What in Thrax's statement suggests this?
(The reference to "current")

4. How does this differ from a modern description of the function of grammar? (Speaking is included and, in fact, primary to some modern grammarians--purpose may differ, depending on which modern grammarian or grammar is used to make the comparison.)

GRAMMATICAL THEORY

(1) The noun ( ) is a part of speech having case-inflections, signifying a person or thing, and is general or particular; examples: 'stone,' 'Socrates'.
(2) The verb ( ) is a part of speech without case-inflection, admitting inflections of tense, person, and number, signifying an activity or a being acted on.
(3) The participle ( ) is a part of speech sharing the formal and functional characteristics of verb and noun.
(4) The article ( ) is a part of speech with case-inflections, placed before and after nouns (this category covers the Greek definite article ( ) and the relative pronoun ( ).
(5) The pronoun ( ) is a part of speech used in place of the noun and indicative of specific personal reference.
(6) The preposition ( ) is a part of speech placed before other parts of speech in syntactical combinations and in word formation.
(7) The adverb ( ) is a part of speech with case-inflection, further specifying the verb.

(8) The conjunction ( ) is a part of speech connecting the train of thought and filling in gaps in its interpretation.

1. Something seems to be missing. What is it? (No adjective mentioned. It was a subordinate part of the noun structure in Thrax's analysis.)

2. Something is added. What is it? (The participle--more common in Greek--is given basic status.)

3. Thrax refers to "inflections". Do modern grammars concern themselves with inflections? If so, how?

   (Yes, they do. Whether structural or generative modern grammars are concerned with formal features, i.e. plurality of nouns, degrees of adjectives, verbs inflected for tense, etc.)

4. What does Thrax mean by "signifying"? (Symbolizing--develop if concept is hazy.)

5. Some of these statements have reference to word meanings, some do not. Which definitions contain references to meaning? (Nouns, verb, adverb, particularly. Some discussion of semantic definitions might be useful pointing to grammar as language about language and the problems therein contained.)

6. Which definition is least specific? Why? (Conjunction. "Why" is fairly obvious.)

7. Which seems most modern? (Noun or verb very likely.)

8. Thrax offers some additional comments on each of the eight "parts of speech" and his grammar is done. Something is missing that is a central concern of modern grammar and very important to language. What is it? (Syntax--develop the criticality of syntax to whatever extent seems efficient.)

SUMMARY AND TRANSITION

What we've discovered to this point, then, is that Greek grammar is dependent in part on the way the Greeks systematized their world, the way they looked at their world. A more economical way of saying this is to say that Greek grammar is, in part, a product of a Greek world view just as Ptolemy's astronomy is a product of that world view.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What characteristics of the Greek way of seeing things or thinking about things (world view) can be seen in both Ptolemy's astronomy and Thrax's grammar? (The empirical bias, the classificatory impulse, the deductive development, and the prescriptive tendency. Certain points developed in the discussion of the Ptolemaic universe will have to be reviewed here.)

2. What similar shortcomings can you see in Ptolemy's and Thrax's treatments of their respective subjects?

   (Erroneous central assumptions, earth-centered universe vs. writing-centered grammar, limited knowledge of other systems, technological limitations, telescope vs. printing or recording devices.

3. Why is an erroneous central assumption a difficult problem for Ptolemy and Thrax to get around? What, in other words, does the Green preference for deductive systems do to these theories?

   (it prevents self-correction. In a deductive system there is no way to change central assumptions.)

   Now we can see the way that the Greeks habitual thought patterns helped to produce and sustain theories or systems for describing or accounting for the movements of the heavenly bodies and the operation of the language.

4. What do you suppose we will find if we examine the development of systems at other points in time in other cultures?

   (Similar connections between habitual perceptual patterns and thought patters and the resulting systems.)

NOTE: The teacher might ask students to begin noting the habitual patterns of their own culture. The method being used to develop the generalizations in the unit could serve as case in point. The teacher might also try having students develop a set of question to be used in examining other systems and the cultures producing them.

We can turn to another period, then, and test the generalization we've made on the basis of our hasty glance at Greek thought and systems. Next we'll examine English society in the Eighteenth Century hoping to discover how, at another point in time, a different set of habits produces ditrerent systems. In this case we'll be a bit more general than we were in comparing Ptolemy and Thrax.

LECTURE OR HANDOUT

The Renaissance was so named because the period before the 13th to 15th centuries was marked by a certain loss to the common man of readings which had been common to all well-read, educated people and the realization in the 13th-15th centuries that there was a wealth of literature and philosophy which could still be read because Latin was still the language of scholarship. In England at the time of Thomas Moore, Roger Bacon, and even Milton, there was a certain status allowed to the man who wrote his treatises in Latin. At this point, therefore, there were a lot of people who were still reading Latin and Greek to relax them at bedtime, and, with the surge in communication, the discovery of printing

the increase in travel and exploration, manuscript after manuscript was being read in Latin or Greek and translated into English, French, and Italian. This rediscovery of Latin and Greek works, works in the so-called "Classical" languages, associated as it was with scholarship (Latin was the writing tool of the professors), was taking place at the same time as a distinctly new business and economic structure was developing. This new economic structure was making a lot of "poor" people rich. The merchant class, once the peasants, now suddenly found themselves in the "dough". But since they had never talked to the educated, it was clear to both groups that the prestige group spoke the language "correctly."

The conviction that there was a "correct" and "perfect" way to say everything was also an outgrowth of the period between Greek and Latin times and the Renaissance. The whole purpose of the artist and the philosopher during what was called the Dark Ages was to discover the "perfect"system of thought. This was true in the Church, in painting, in philosophy. Synthesis was the word--Bring all things into a system--Show how Faith and Reason worked together in the providence of God to make a perfect life possible for the individual. The universe itself according to such thinking was a model of this perfect system. The fact that grammars such as Thrax's still worked, still was

usable for teaching boys how to read and write Latin seemed conclusive proof that a language could reach a stage of perfection. There were also some eulogies on people's writing which praised their style in such superlatives as to encourage the thought that a stage of a language could be its perfect, or "correct" stage, from which all deviations were harmful, degradations, indications of decadence. All of these thoughts were so reasonable.

By the eighteenth century these factors combined to produce a new "classical" age, an age similar to the golden age of Greece. The mathematicians had discovered pure mathematics. Des Cartes worked out a system that explained the whole universe by mathematical laws. Newton opened the door to a system of scientific laws which seemed to indicate that a logical system of laws of nature could be discovered. Theories of government, justifying their imperialistic inroads on "savage" nations, developed ideas of perfect governments and moral systems. All this was very reasonable. No one seemed to remember that Bacon's first scientific laws required careful observation of facts, and once again reason ran ahead of direct observation and began to disregard the facts.

There were people in the 18th century who did see that some of these elaborate systems were not workable in practice. But in the field of education, where

social climbers were reasonably justifying their attempts to get on the same street with the Joneses and where the educated were justifying their rejection of lower class manners, the idea of a perfect, and correct system was too appealing. The Age of Reason, then, was an age of forgetfulness of direct experience.

Let us look more closely at the attitudes which dominated the eighteenth century, or more specifically, that period referred to as "The Age of Reason." As you read the following excerpt consider carefully the characteristics of 18th century thought which marked the period as "The Age of Reason."

NOTE: Here and elsewhere in this unit references will be made to the distribution ot readings to students. In each case page references and appropriate citations will be given. Teachers are free to use either the materials mentioned or similar materials with which they are familiar. In some cases the teacher may wish to paraphrase the sources mentioned, adapting the materials to the needs and abilities of the students. In this case, pages 243-244 ot R. C. Pooley, Ed. England in Literature. Chicago: Scott, Foresman; 1963; should be distributed.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. On the basis of what you have read, what label was given to the eighteenth century? (The Age of Reason)

2. What reasons are given in the excerpt for this label? (natural law, rigid rules)

3. To what areas in eighteenth century society were these rules applied?

4. What did the people ot the eighteenth century call themselves? (Augustans) How did they get this term? (Emperor Augustus of Rome)

Optional
The teacher might point out the dependence of 18th century thought on classical ideals, bringing in the term neo-classic.

5. In the above excerpt, reread the sentence in which the following words appear: "stabilized, " "civilized," "cherish law and reason." These key words characterize the ideals of the Augustans. Compare ideals such as these with those held during the classical period (Greek, Roman). In terms of previous civilizations, how original were the ideals of the 18th century Augustans?

6. Compare the ideals of the Augustan with 20th century man's concern for "getting ahead."

   (A freewheeling discussion would be appropriate here. Western's man faith in "progress" should be apparent to students.)

We have seen that the 18th century was dominated by beliefs best expressed in the words, "reason, natural laws, and progress." The achievements of Newton pointed to a system of scientific laws which exemplified the pattern of law and reason dominant in the period. In an age of rigid rules what then was the attitude toward language? Let us examine the following excerpts from Johnson's Dictionary in an effort to discover some of these attitudes:

NOTE: Students should read appropriate sections of the "Preface" to Johnson's Dictionary; pp. 3, 5, 7, and 27 of E. L. McAdam, Jr. and G. Milne. Johnson's Dictionary. New York: Pantheon; 1963. contain such passages.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

NOTE: These questions are based on the passages mentioned previously. If the teacher chooses different passages the questions would need modification.

1. Reread the first selection from Johnson's Dictionary. What key phrases reflect Johnson's attitude toward the English language as it stood in the 18th century? ("under the direction of chance," "the tyranny of time and fashion," "the corruption of ignorance," "the caprices of innovation.")

2. According to Johnson then, what had happened to the English language? (The language had been neglected, with a consequent loss of shape and stability. The language had changed.)

3. What caused this change in language? (In discussing this question, the teacher might draw attention to the following phrases: "altered by accident," "depraved by ignorance," "pronunciation of the vulgar has been weakly followed.")

4. Is change in language looked upon favorably by Johnson and the men of his age? (Stability is preferred. Change is looked upon as degeneration.)

5. After reading the above excerpts, what do you think Johnson would do about continued change in English? (Johnson and the men of his age attempted to preserve the language from further degeneration through change.)

6. In an earlier discussion we saw that "The Age of Reason" sought to bring all things into a "reasonable system, whether it be "the pruning of gardens," or "the way in which people should conduct themselves." You will recall that "reason," "natural laws," and "progress" were the key words of the age. In what way does Johnson's attitude toward language reflect

the age in which he lived? (The teacher might expand the 18th century belief that a "perfect" or "correct" stage in language development could be reached; a stage from which all deviations were harmful.)

SAMPLE LECTURE:

The men of the 18th century, then, viewed language change as a decaying process. The time had come to "fix" or preserve the English language. Thomas Sheridan reflects this need for purification and preservation in his book on British education, the title of which is significant: British Education; or the source of the Disorders of Great Britain, being an Essay towards proving that the Immorality, Ignorance, and false Taste which so generally prevail are the natural and necessary consequences of the present defective System of Education, with an Attempt to show that a Revival of the Art of Speaking, and the Study of our own Language, might contribute, in a Great Measure to the Cure of these Evils (1756). Sheridan goes on to comment in his preface, "It is only necessary to mention what the scheme is: a design to revive the long lost art of oratory, and to correct, ascertain, and fix the English language." Thus, as in all other areas of endeavor, "The Age of Reason" sought to apply the absolute standard to language. Keepin this view of language in mind, let us look at several grammars published during the 18th century in an attempt to discover the points of view and purposes of the 18th century grammarian:

NOTE: Distribute Excerpt 1 to be read by students.

Richard Johnson,
Grammatical Commentaries,
Preface, p. x--the pages
of the preface are not
numbered.

"I cannot but think it would be of great Advantage, both for the Improvement of Reason in general (the Art of Speaking having such an Affinity with that of Reasoning, which it represents) and also for the exact use of our own Language; which for want of Rule is subject to Uncertainty, and the Occasion of frequent Contentions. And upon this account, it has been the Practice of several wise Nations, such of them, I mean, as have a thorough Education, to learn even their own Language by Stated Rules, to avoid that Confusion that must needs follow from leaving it wholly to vulgar Use. Sure no Body need think long upon this Subject to be convinced, that if there go so much Art to right reasoning, there must go some also to the right speaking, I mean to a clear and certain Expression of that Reason, which is the Business of Grammar. Certainly Chancd can never equal Rule and Method in a think of this Moment Rule and Method in a thing of this Moment and Curiosity. The Subject therefore of this treatise, is no matter of little Concernment, by which so much Good may be done in the world."

Robert Lowth,
A Short Introduction etc.
(1762), Preface, x.

"The principal design of a Grammar of any Language is to reach us to express ourselves with propriety in that Language, and to enable us to judge of every phrase and form of construction whether it be right or not. The plain way of doing this, is to lay down rules, and to illustrate them by examples. But, besides shewing what is right, the matter may be further explained by pointing out what is wrong."

William Ward,
English Grammar (1765),
Preface, v. xvii, xxi.

"It is manifest that some Rules for the Construction of the Language must be used, and those Rules reduced to some Kind of System.....

(1) Lowth's A Short Introduction etc., 1762:

But let us consider, how, and in what extent, we are to understand this charge brought against the English Language (referring to Swift's statement that our language "offends against every part of grammar")....Does it mean that the English Language, as it is spoken by the politest part of the nation, and as it stands in the writings of our most approved authors, often offends against every part of grammar? Thus far, I am afraid, the charge is true. Or does it further imply, that our Language is in its nature irregular and capricious; not hitherto subject nor easily reducible to a System of rules? In this respect, I am persuaded, the charge is wholly without foundation.

(2) W. Ward's English Grammar, 1765:

(referring to the work of Lowth) This piece is excellent on account of the Nores, in which are shewn the grammatic Inaccuracies that have escaped the Pens of our most distinguished Writers....

If your Scholars are Natives of England,...false English pointed out to them may be of the greatest Use. For they are apt to follow Custom and example, even where it is faulty, till they are apprized of their Mistake. And therefore by shewing where Custom is erroneous, his Lordship has well deserved the Thanks of everyone who values the English Language and Literature....In short, a very blameable Neglect of grammatic Propriety has prevailed amongst the English Writers, and at length we seem to be growing generally sensible of it; as likewise of the Use which may be made of a Knowledge of the English Grammar, towards assisting Children to comprehend the general Import and Advantage of Rules concerning Language.

(3) Thomas Sheridan's Preface to his <u>Dictionary</u>, 1780:

...Yet so little regard has been paid to it (the English language)
...that out of our numerous array of authors, very few can be selected who write with accuracy;
...Nay it has lately been proved by a learned prelate in an essay upon our grammar, that some of our most celebrated writers, and such as have hiterto passed for our English classics, have been guilty of great solecisms, inaccuracies, and even grammatical improperieties, in many places of their most finished works."

(4) Charles Coote's English Grammar, 1788:

Among the middling ranks of life, grammar appears to be too much disregarded. Those who are occupied in trade or manufactures, are, for the most part, so intent upon the consideration of things, that they regard words as almost unworthy of attention, being satisfied with rendering themselves barely intelligible.

The members of the three learned professions are confessedly superior to the generality in the accurate use of their native language. But even among them, there is some deficiency in this respect....

Persons of rank and fashion, though they generally speak with ease and elegance, are not remarkable for being models of accurate expression.

Authors are, without controversy, the persons on whom it is more particularly incumbent both in speaking and writing, to observe a strict adherence to grammatical propriety....But this is a point to which the greater part even of our most esteemed writers have not sufficiently attended.

This deficiency in grammatical precision may be obviated and supplied by a competent degree of attention, in the first place, to the fundamental principles of grammar, and, secondly to the particular rules of the language.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. What is the purposes of the 18th century grammarian? (To teach the English people correct usage by conforming to standards of reason.)

2. How is this purpose to be carried out? (Through rules and directions supported by examples.)

SAMPLE TRANSITION:

When you tell someone how to speak, you are prescribing a way to speak; therefore we label the grammar of the 18th century "prescriptive grammar." Whereas the grammars of the 16th and 17th centuries were introductions to the study of Latin, the 18th century grammar sought to teach English people the correct use of English. As Charles Fries points out, "The authors of...the 18th century English grammars for English people, are in somewhat surprising agreement in respect to the purpose of their work. Usually they express either or both of these two aims: (a) to reduce the language to rule, to "churn it into method;" and (b) to correct the usage of English people by making it conform to a standard of "reason." Let us look at the following excerpts in an attempt to discover what standards were used in teaching the people "correct English."

NOTE: For example, the teacher might consider J. Newberry's Grammar Made Familiar (1745): "To teach this by Rules and Directions is the Business of Grammar, which though the same in all languages as to its general principles, must adapt its particular Precepts to the Nature and Genius of the Tongue for which they are intended."

This untested conviction that all languages are basically the same underlines the continued use of the Thraxiam grammar in somewhat adapted translation.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. In our earlier discussion of 18th century grammar, we saw that the grammarian's purpose was to teach people "correct" usage. How was this to be done? (rules)

2. According to the above authors, are these rules setting the standard for the "correct" use of English? (yes)
3. What is setting the standard? (custom)

4. Does the 18th century grammarian accept custom as the basis for correctness? Why not?

5. Based on the above excerpts, what is the 18th century grammarian's conception of "correctness" in grammar? What does he consider "incorrect?"

6. In our opening discussion of the 18th century we made the following comment: "The Age of Reason," then was another age of forgetfulness of direct experience." Relate this statement to the point of view and purpose of the 18th century grammarian. Consider, particularly, his attitude toward "custom" and the correct use of language.

SAMPLE SUMMARY:

We can thus see that the 18th century grammarian assumes a certain "absolute measuring rod of correctness in grammar" (Fries, p. 231), labeling as "incorrect" all usage which does not meet this standard. Thus usage or custom was not accepted as a standard for correctness. What then was the basis for this measuring rod of correctness?

Consider the following statements:

> James Buchanan, English Grammar (1767). Considering the many grammatical Improprieties to be found in our best Writers, such as Swift, Addison, Pope, etc. a Systematical English syntax is not beneath the Notice of the Learned themselves. Should it be urged, that in the Time of these Writers, English was but a very little subjected to Grammar, that they had scarecely a single Rule to direct them, a question readily occurs. Had they not the Rules of Latin Syntax to direct them?

NOTE: It should be emphasized that the influence of Latin grammar dominated 18th century thought and continued into the 19th.

It was therefore Latin Grammar which provided the rules of the 18th century grammar; rules which were used as the standard for "correct" language. Earlier in our discussion we saw that the 18th century attitude towards language and language study was a reflection of "The Age of Reason," an age dominated by rigid rules "upheld in the name of correctness, propriety, decorum and common sense..."

Let us examine, further, conditions in the 18th century which possibly led to the development of 18th century attitudes toward language.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

NOTE: Distribute or read aloud R. C. Pooley, Ed. England in Literature. Chicago: Scott, Foresman; 1963; p. 245, "The passing of the reins..." to "... came to be known as gentility."

1. In our earlier discussion we saw that the 18th century society was "rule-conscious" as a result of its dependence on classical beliefs and ideals as well as its advancements in science. Based on your reading of the above excerpt, what was another reason for 18th century man's emphasis on "rules?" (Rise of the middle class)

2. In the above excerpt, it was pointed out that the coffee house was a popular meeting place during the 18th century. What groups came into contact here?

3. What problems did the middle class have as a result of this contact with the upper class?

4. Imagine that you are in a situation where it is necessary to be accepted by an "in-group." If you wish to "belong" what are some of the things you might do?
(Adjust to the group's way of acting; attempt to imitate their use of language.)

Thus, one way of identifying with an "in-group" or a prestige group is through language. In the 18th century we have a middle class rising in importance. English is more frequently used in business and trade. As the middle class grows in wealth, more leisure time is available, with a consequent concern for "correctness" in manner and speaking.

5. How is the middle class to learn this "correct" use of English?
(Rules and direction to guide them.)

6. Do you see any relationship between the rise of the middle class and the 18th century attitude toward language which emphasized the necessity of preserving the language from any further corruption.

SAMPLE LECTURE: (part of transition from 18th to 19th centuries)

Toward the end of the 18th century a seemingly unremarkable English judge named Sir William Jones decided that the time had come to share some observations he had made Sir William was serving in Calcutta, India, and had long been interested in Sanskrit, the literary and religious language of India. This language was quite old and had been carefully analyzed and described by a grammarian named Panini. Panini's work had been known for some time, but little attention had been paid it since it seemed quite different and unrelated to the Greco-Latin grammar then fashionable. Panini's purpose was to retain the ceremonial Sanskrit of the church so that later generations would hear the ceremonies just as they would have sounded in centuries past. He had described Sanskr as it was rather than concerning himself with the ways in which it might be applied. The result was the first precise descritpion of a language as it really wa ; the first descriptive grammar.

Jones, in his readings of Sanskrit and the grammar of Panini, came to the conclusion that what was being described was not so different from other languages. In fact, Jones thought he saw similarities between Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin. He was not the first to make these observations, but he was the first to do something about it. Hence, on the evening of February 2 1786, Sir William Jones stood to address the "Asiatick," (his 18th century spelling) Society on the subject of Sanskrit. Here is part of what he had to say. Read it carefully.

NOTE: Distribute a copy of Excerpt #2 to each student.

From a paper read before the "Asiatick" Society

The Sanscrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquistely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident: so strong indeed, that no philologer could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which perhaps, no longer exists (italics mine): there is a similar reason, though not quite so forcible, for supposing that both the Gothick and the Celtic, though blended with a very different idiom, had the same origin with the Sanscrit; and the old Persian might be added to the same family.

(Sir William Jones,
February 2, 1786)

SAMPLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What languages had grammarians studied in the 18th century?
   (Latin, Greek)

2. Why did they give such attention to these languages?
   (They believed they were "model" languages, more adequate than English for expression and more perfect in structure)

3. What languages had Jones apparently studies according to the above excerpt?
   (Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, Gothic, Celtic, Persian)

4. For what reason did Jones seem to be studying so many languages?
   (In order to compare them)

5. Did Jones feel that Greek and Latin were superior to any other languages?
   (No; he felt Sanscrit was superior.)

6. What seems to be Jones' major aim in studying languages?
   (To find a common origin; to see how they are related)

7. How does this compare with the aims of the 18th century grammarians?
   (They studied language in order to prescribe what was correct. They were prescriptive.)

SAMPLE LECTURE:

Thus, the linguists began to shift their focus from Greek and Latin to other languages. The interests in Sanscrit grew. Soon more and more ancient languages became the object of intensive linguistic study--study which was essentially comparative. That is, linguists studied languages in order to find relationships among them. They also wanted to trace their histories in an attempt to find common origins. A 19th century Danish linguist named Rasmus Rask believed that language was "our principle means of finding out anything about the history of nations before the existence of written documents." And, in 1814, the Danish Academy sponsored

a contest "To investigate and illustrate, with appropriate examples...from what source the ancient Scandinavian languages can most surely be derived."

NOTE: Students should keep Excerpt #2 for future reference.

Linguistic study in the 19th century, as we shall see, was primarily historical and comparative.

SAMPLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

We have seen at various points in this unit that the concerns of the linguist are often influenced by and related to the interests of other men in the society of their day.

1. How did Greek society to some extent determine what were to the concerns of the grammarian?
2. What was it about the climate of the 18th century which created a need for a prescriptive grammar?

NOTE: The teacher may want to save these points and have the class bring them out at the end of the section on the 19th century.

We are going to see a similar kind of relationship in the 19th century, but this time on two levels: 1) The theoretical: How were the activities of the linguists related to those of the scientists, historians, and other scholars of the age? 2) The Practical: Where the findings and attitudes of the linguists put into practice in the society of the times or did it remain true to the prescriptivism of the 18th century?

First, let's look at level one. Were the studies of the linguists in any way related to studies of other men in the 19th century? What about the field of science? Just as linguists were concerned with the origin of and relationships among languages of the world, so was a famous scientist interested in the origin of and relationships among forms of life. Who was this man? (Charles Darwin)

NOTE: Distribute Excerpt #3

...Those naturalists, on the other hand, who admit the principle of evolution, and this is now admitted by the majority of rising men, will feel no doubt that all the races of men are descended from a single primitive stock; whether or not they may think it fit to designate the races as distinct species, for the sake of expressing their amount of difference. With our domestic animals the question whether the various races have arisen from one or more species is somewhat different. Although it may be admitted that all the races as well as all the natural species within the same genus, have sprung from the same primitive stock, yet it is a fit subject for discussion, whether all the domestic races of the dog, for instance, have acquired their present amount of difference since some one species was first domesticated by man; or whether they owe some of their characters to inheritance from distinct species, which had already been differentiated in a state of nature. With man no such question can arise, for he cannot be said to have been domesticated at any particular period.

During an early stage in the divergence of the races of man from a common stock, the differences between the races and their number must have been small; consequently as far as their distinguishing characters are concerned, they then had less claim to rank as distinct species than the existing so-called races. Nevertheless, so arbitrary is the term of species, that such early races would perhaps have been ranked by some naturalists as distinct species, if their differences, although extremely slight, had been more constant than they are at present, and had not graduated into each other.

From C. Darwin. The Descent of Man. London: Appleton, 1874.

Read the following quote from Darwin and see if his interests are in anyway similar to those of Sir William Jones.

Following excerpt:

NOTES: Students should also have copies of Excerpt #2 for purposes of comparison.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. What did Jones believe to be true about Sanscrit, Greek, and Latin?
   (They had "sprung from some common source")

2. Is Darwin making a similar statement about forms of life?
   (Yes; he believed "all the races" had "sprung from the same primitive stock.")

Thus, both Darwin and Jones were concerned with reconstructing historical relationships. They had something else in common.

3. In what way might Jones be rejecting an attitude of the 18th century?
   (He believed Latin and Greek were not the only languages to be studied. He disagreed with the view that they were somehow superior to all other languages.)

4. Does anyone know in what way Darwin disagreed with traditional ideas?
   (He rejected the notion that all forms of life appeared on earth 6,000 years ago in the space of a week.)

NOTE: These points bear on material from Units 701 and 703.

5. What claim is Darwin making in Excerpt #2?
   (That all races descended from a common stock.)

6. In science, what is another term for claim? (Students who have had 703 may recall.)
   (Theory or hypothesis)

7. If a friend comes up to you and says he has a theory that there will be two eclipses of the sun every year for a century, what might you ask him to do?
   (Prove it! Provide evidence.)

That's correct. A scientist's theory, if it is to be accepted, must be well-supported by evidence or data.

8. How does a scientist obtain data?
   (By observing and describing. He is empirical.)

To gather his evidence, Charles Darwin went on a long voyage to observe plant and animal life. When he had gathered what he considered to be sufficient evidence, he wrote a now-famous book called The Origin of Species. (1859)

9. What would happen to a scientist's theory if he or other people found evidence which tended to disprove the hypothesis?
   (The theory would be revised or eliminated from consideration.)

We have been discussing some important parts of what is known as the scientific method. In the 19th century, language also began to be studied using the scientific method. A linguist named William Dwight Whitney wrote in 1875 (16 years after Darwin's book): "...the science of language is to be regarded as a modern one, as much so as geology and chemistry; it belongs like them to the nineteenth century."

Let's go back to Excerpt #1 and see if the scientific method could be applied to Jones' studies.

10. What was Sir William Jones' claim or hypothesis in Excerpt #1?
    (That Sanscrit, Greek, and Latin come from a common source.)

11. What was necessary before such a theory would be accepted?
    (Empirical evidence)

Indeed, many linguists set out to gather such evidence. They found that Slavic, Romanic, Germanic, and many other languages of the modern world are related.

Let's see if the scientific method was used by linguists for other reasons. Many of you are probably familiar with either the play or movie version of "My Fair Lady." This play was adapted from G. B. Shaw's Pygmalion published in 1900. It is the story of an amateur linguist who tries to raise the social status of a poor girl by changing her speaking habits.

Read the following excerpt, watching for ways in which Higgins seems to be using parts of the scientific method.

NOTE: Distribute selection from C. C. Fries. Linguistics and Reading. New York: Holt, Rhinehart, Winston; 1962; p. 54. The key passage begins with "G. B. Shaw's well known Pygmalion..." and ends with "...the written transcript before you."

1. What could we call Higgin's "claim" or "hypothesis?"

   ("Well, sir, in 3 months I could pass that girl off as a duchess at an ambassador's garden party.")

   (Or, more specifically the Flower Girl could change the sounds of her speech.)

2. What kind of "data" or evidence were Higgins and Pickering dealing with?

   (Sounds, phonemes, real utterances)

3. How did they gather their evidence?

   (By listening to her speech, making recordings, and writing transcripts)

4. What do you suppose was the final test of Higgins' claim?

   (Whether she was "discovered" at the party.)

In this discussion, we have brought out some important characteristics of the 19th century linguists. First, they employed the scientific method, formulating hypotheses and searching for empirical evidence. Second, they were concerned with describing living speech.

You will notice, however, that our amateur linguist also shows some of the prescriptive attitude we saw in the 18th century. Can you find it?

(He wants the Flower Girl to speak "better English;" He is correcting, in a sense, her speaking habits.)

Higgins is revealing an important fact about the relationship between 19th century society and the linguists. Most linguists, unlike Higgins and other people in 19th century society, were not concerned with prescription. They wanted to describe language as they found it. The true linguists and grammarians themselves would not have been primarily concerned with "correcting" the speech of a girl such as Eliza Doolittle of Pygmalion.

They were essentially theorists.

Linguists themselves began to reject the notion of an absolute, correct manner of using language. No variation was inherently better than any other. In 1875, a linguist named Whitney stated:

> "The science of language has democratized our views on such points as these; it has taught us that one man's speech is just as much a language as another man's; that even the most cultivated tongue that exists is only the dialect of a certain class in a certain locality..."
>
> /In Fries, Linguistics and Reading, (New York: Holt-Rinehart), 1962, p. 39/

Nineteenth century linguists' attitudes toward change in language were also different from the prescriptivism of the 18th century.

Read Excerpt #4 and compare 18th and 19th century attitudes toward change.

NOTE: Distribute Excerpt #4.

The teacher may bring out the following through questions:

(1) The history of language shows changes have always occurred.
(2) What have been considered "corruptions" by some have had no injurious effect on the language.
(3) These changes cannot be prevented.
(4) Actual usage of speakers is the basis for correctness.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS ON THE EXCERPT:

Relate to Darwin--Change a condition of the universe: nothing is "fixed." Evolution=change. Human life is the result of centuries of change. Language also changes.

1. According to Lounsbury, what do we find when we look at the history of language from a grammatical standpoint?
(Changes)

2. What other word does Lounsbury use for change?
(Corruption)

3. What do we mean today by corruption?
(Something evil or injurious)

4. Does Lounsbury seem to use the word in this sense?
(No--he says the "corruptions" are not injurious)

5. Would Lounsbury agree with the 18th century views on change in Language?
(No; Lounsbury believes changes are not bad, that today's language is not "less pure and vigorous." Johnson, you will recall, feared change and considered it degeneration.)

6. According to Hall, what is meant by usage?
(The forms used customarily by speakers)

7. What do you guess to be Hall's basis for "correctnes
(The actual usage of speakers.)

SIGNS OF CHANGE IN THEORY IN LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY:

T. R. Lounsbury, History of the English Language (New York, 1879), pp. 351-353.

...the history of language, when looked at from the purely grammatical point of view, is little less than the history of corruptions...But it is equally true that these grammatical changes, or corruptions...have had no injurious effects upon the development of language...It is, at the present time, a fashion to talk of our speech as being in some way less pure and vigorous than it was in the days of Alfred...But the test of any tongue is not the grammatical or linguistic resources which it may be supposed to possess; it is the use which it makes of the resources it does possess...for it is a lesson which may learn with difficulty, and some never learn at all, that purism is not purity.

Fitzedward Hall, Recent Exemplifications of False Philosophy (New York, 1872), pp. 66, 88.

Now, by usage of speech we mean the forms of it which are customarily employed; and by grammar and lexicography, orderly records thereof. Although, then, speech tended "more and more to conform itself to reasons" grammar could never be opposed to reason; since, as speech changes, itself changes...The case standing thus, how is it that Mr. White wishes to revive English which has become obsolete, and how is it that he is so sorely grieved by the English of his contemporaries, may well perplex us.

TRANSITION: If the linguists had these new ideas then why did some people continue to feel there was a "better" or "more correct" way of speaking?

To answer this question we will have to look at conditions in the society of the time.

SAMPLE LECTURE:

The Victorian Age:

What do you think of when you hear the term "Victorian?" (stuffy, inflexible, "respectable," etc.) All of these terms apply, of course. None of us especially like to be called or thought of as "Victorian." In a sense, it seems to mean resistant to change, closed-mindedness. Yet, the Victorians thought of their age as one of progress. They felt that their age was filled with real and significant changes in science, technology, politics, and social reform. Surely, during Queen Victoria's reign, from 1837 to 1901, the world did seem to change radically, to become truly modern. Yet few persons who study this period in history stop to consider how real the change was. By "real" we mean simply, "Was the change just a surface one--did the same old problems still exist beneath, unsolved? Or was the new life complete--was there really progress and improvement?"

The Middle Class Rises

The Industrial Revolution, with its rise in urban factory centers, brought with it extremes of prosperity, and poverty and human degradation. The burgeoning social concern for the less fortunate often found itself blocked by Social Darwinism, the "survival of the fittest" (or richest!) philosophy with which many of rich justified

the ways in which they'd gotten their riches. And covering everything, like a heavy dark blanket, was a dull middle class complacency--a resistance to change--which somehow could not and did not still the fantastic scientific research and discovery which also characterized the age. Religious orthodoxy and confused disbelief, moral and immoral, right and wrong...

SAMPLE REVIEW QUESTION: In what ways can you compare this to the rise of the Middle Class in the 18th century?

(Those who are most insecure--in this case, the newly rich--usually try to make the biggest impression. Language is primary to this process. The middle class will want to make others conform and will reject those who don't.)

Certainly, if one description could attempt to characterize the Victorian Age, it would be "Age of Opposites." What we call "the temper of the times" would, for this age, be one of contrasting tempers which could hardly be united. But such a description could be used to characterize just about any age, for the tension between opposing views creates the life thread of history. Yet the contrasts of the 19th century are of special interest, not only because they are in themselves unique, but because they pave the way for the tensions which define our lives today.

If the scientist were to view the 19th century, he would probably think of it as the age of Darwin. Charles Darwin's work in the field of biological evolution symbolized the hopes and aspirations of the young intellectuals of the age. The scientific mind was predominantly a young mind.

In an age where nice, staid, respectable people simply did not question authority, energetic and intelligent young people were beginning to reject such authority. More and more, the pat answers and formulas were being questioned. The new mind asked why and demanded intelligent and scientifically demonstrable proofs. In an age where such questioning is all but forbidden, great courage is needed to be this way. We must understand, however, that the people who did ask questions challenging authority were a minority.

The majority of Victorians lived according to brittle and wholly inflexible moral codes. You behaved in a certain way, you spoke in a certain way--choosing this word and accent rather than that.

So that you may get an idea of what the code of correct language was like, we will read a short selection on the "polite English" of theVictorian era. As you read it, think of what Professor Higgins says of Eliza, in Pygmalion: "...I could even get her a place as a lady's maid or shop assistant, which requires better English." What does that tell you about the society of the times?

NOTE: Distribute or read aloud the section titled "The Changing English Language" in R. C. Pooley, Ed. England in Literature. Chicago: Scott, Foresman; 1963; p. 476.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. How do you think this would affect the study and teaching of language?
   (It would be highly prescriptive: Only what society thought were "the correct" codes would be taught.)

2. How would you relate this to what Professor Higgins was trying to teach Eliza Doolittle in Shaw's Pgymalion?
(Perfect use of the "correct" forms of language was they key to "passing her off as a duchess" in polite society.)

3. What genteelisms can you think of which are currently used?
("Save" and "dentifrice" do occur in advertising, etc.)

4. What characterizes PRESCRIPTIVE speech for Victorians?
(Extreme formality, bloated diction, etc)

5. Why do you think the peole who use such language are interested in being so formal?
(They've just "arrived" and are probably unsure of themselves in their new positions)

6. Can you relate this to teen-age "security jargon?"

Let us return, then, to characterizing Victorian culture.

SAMPLE LECTURE:

You made your living in a certain way; life was all comfortable and proper and cozy. If you did what you were told, what the neighbors expected of you, and did not ask questions about the life which could not be easily answered, life was nice for you. And for most persons, thinking was outside the realm of proper behavior. Women, especially, were not to think, but sigh, faint, when necessary, do needlework, marry, and raise utterly immense families. Men were to become quite successful in rising industry and business and other such respectable areas. They were to conform, as well as possible, to rigid social codes and grow huge whiskers and girths. Still, this was not everyone in Victorian society. This was the middle class--and the age was essentially that of the middle class. Better still, we can say that it was dominated by the middle class, which wanted to see and could only see society in its own terms. The rising

industrialism made for prosperity, to be sure, but prosperity for a limited group. Life was not plump and rosy for everyone. Disease and starvation were quite real; were, in fact, conspicuous in the midst of boom. And when the middle class could no longer ignore the presence of such things, they rationalized. Poverty, they said, could be blamed on the laziness and biological inferiority of the unfortunate poor. "True, true," said the barons of the industry, "why pay lazy and inferior people living wages?" So Darwin's survival of the fittest theory was handily transplanted to justify social conditions.

It was easy for the majority to believe such justifications, because such belief did not require thinking. Thinking led one to question society, which was not nice. Yet, a few did question certain aspects of life and knowledge. Why, you must ask, didn't their questions cause some unrest? Why didn't the questions make the people <u>want</u> to change things? The peculiar characteristic of this age--let us call it the climate of the age--was overwhelmingly stuffy. Once the questions were asked, the theories and hypotheses formulated, the investigations begun, the questioners somehow ceased to become an active and integral part of their culture. Perhaps they did not want to be aliens to their own times. Perhaps they were not even aware that they were. Yet thinking and questioning and challenging existing authority became in itself a solitary confinement of the mind from its times.

Now, looking backwards from the distance of time, we see the age as defined in terms of its thinkers, its philosophers and scientists, its lonely men. The age itself must have gone on, oblivious to most of them. But, you say, it's impossible that the minds which moved that world were almost ignored. If not, how then can you explain the vast differences between the scientific theories and discoveries of the nineteenth century and the practices of society? It is small wonder that one writer described the dilemma at the end of the nineteenth century as one of intellectual claustrophobia! Try to explain the vast differences between the theories and substantiating data of new descriptive linguistics and the old style, prescriptive grammar teaching. Note the gap between the theories of interrelationships between languages and origins of races, and the rising nationalism in which each nation was taught to pride itself on its supposed uniqueness and superiority. Theory and practice were two separate worlds. Poets such as Schiller and Walt Whitman, sang of the bortherhood of man, but when readers closed the books of poems, the thoughts were not put into practice.

How was the middle class mind, so steeped in orthodoxy and correctness, trained? No doubt you have heard of the McGuffey's Readers. You recall the excerpt on "How to speak concisely from the fifth Reader. These were textbooks for elementary school pupils. Filled with endless do's and don'ts, and absolute rules about

proper grammar, diction, and deportment, McGuffey's Readers were drilled into the very souls of Victorian children. Speak well, read well, write well, and you too can be a great success. That is, if you speak the way the middle class things rich people do, you will be rich too, someday. Consider the following standard McGuffey story:

NOTE: Distribute Excerpt #5

STUDY QUESTIONS ABOUT
The Good Reader:

1. What were the keys to success (prosperity) noted in the selection? (Success supposedly came automatically once these skills were mastered. Ability to read and speak well.)

2. Simplicity of expression was noted as being desirable in good speaking and writing. Was it used in the story itself? Comment on the style and cite specific areas to support your statements. (The style is full of the "genteelisms" and bloated diction of the Victorians.)

Such books as the Readers were the means by which a totally new class of people--the immigrants--were to become parts of the nineteenth century society in America. Arriving to live, for the most part, in poverty, the middle class books were to be the key to molding these people into Americans. Yet, note the shoddy treatment of the immigrants by a prosperous and supposedly sympathetic middle class.

What was it like to be a young immigrant, thrust suddenly into a burgeoning Middle Class society, ignorant of its "approved" language and customs? Edward Steiner was such a young man. In this excerpt from his autobiography, From Alien to Citizen, he describes his dilemma.

NOTE: Distribute or read aloud E. Steiner. From Alien to Citizen. New York: Revell Co. 1914; pp. 74-80.

THE GOOD READER

1. It is told of Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, that, as he was seated one day in his private room, a written petition was brought to him with the request that it should be immediately read. The King had just returned from hunting, and the glare of the sun, or some other cause, had so dazzled his eyes that he found it difficult to make out a single word of the writing.

2. His private secretary happened to be absent; and the soldier who brought the petition could not read. There was a page, or favorite boy--servant, waiting in the hall, and upon him the King called. The page was a son of one of the noblemen of the court, but proved to be a very poor reader.

3. In the first place, he did not articulate distinctly. He huddled his words together in the utterance, as if they were syllables of one long word, which he must get through with as speedily as possible. His pronunciation was bad, and he did not modulate his voice so as to bring out the meaning of what he read. Every sentence was uttered with a dismal monotony of voice, as if it did not differ in any respect from that which preceded it.

4. "Stop!" said the King, impatiently. "Is it an auctioneer's list of goods to be sold that you are hurrying over? Send your companion to me." Another page who stood at the door now entered, and to him the King gave the petition. The second page began by hemming and clearing his throat in such an affected manner that the King jokingly asked him if he had not slept in the public garden, with the gate open, the night before.

5. The second page had a good share of self-conceit, however, and so was not greatly confused by the King's jest. He determined that he would avoid the mistake which his comrade had made. So he commenced reading the petition slowly and with great formality, emphasizing every word, and prolonging the articulation of every syllable. But his manner was tedious that the King cried out, "Stop! are you reciting a lesson in the elementary sounds? Out of the room! But no: stay! Send me that little girl who is sitting there by the fountain."

6. The girl thus pointed out by the King was a daughter of one of the laborers employed by the royal gardener; and she had come to help her father weed the flowerbeds. It chanced that, like many of the poor people in Prussia, she had received a good education. She was somewhat alarmed when she found herself in the King's presence, but took courage when the King told her that he only wanted her to read for him, as his eyes were weak.

7. Now Ernestine (for this was the name of the little girl) was fond of reading aloud, and often many of the neighbors would assemble at her father's house to hear her; those who could not read themselves would come to her, also, with their letters from distant friends or children, and she thus formed the habit of reading various sorts of hand-writing promptly and well.

8. The King gave her the petition, and she rapidly glanced through the opening lines to get some idea of what it was about. As she read, her eyes began to glisten, and her breast to heave. "What is the matter?" asked the King; "don't you know how to read?" "Oh, yes! sire," she replied, addressing him with the title usually applied to him: "I will now read it, if you please."

9. The two pages were about to leave the room. "Remain," said the King. The little girl began to read the petition. It was from a poor widow, whose only son had been drafted to serve in the army, although his health was delicate and his pursuits had been such as to unfit him for military life. His father had been killed in battle, and the son had a strong desire to become a portrait-painter.

10. The writer told her story in a simple, concise manner, that carried to the heart a belief of its truth; and Ernestine read it with so much feeling, and with an articulation so just, in tones so pure and distinct, that when she had finished, the King, into whose eyes the tears had started, exclaimed, "Oh! now I understand what it is all about; but I might never have known, certainly I never should have felt its meaning had I trusted to these young gentlemen, whom I now dismiss from my service for one year, advising them to occupy the time in learning to read.

11. "As for you, my young lady," continued the King, "I know you will ask no better reward for your trouble than the pleasure of carrying to this poor widow my order for her son's immediate discharge. Let me see if you can write as well as you can read. Take this pen, and write as I dictate." He then dictated an order, which Ernestine wrote, and he signed. Calling one of his guards, he bade him go with the girl and see that the order was obeyed.

12. How much happiness was Ernestine the means of bestowing through her good elocution, united to the happy circumstance that brought it to the knowledge of the King! First, there were her poor neighbors, to whom she could give instruction and entertainment. Then, there was the poor widow who sent the petition, and who not only regained her son, but received through Ernestine an order for him to paint the King's likeness; so that the poor boy soon rose to great distinction, and had more orders than he could attend to. Words could not express his gratitude, and that of his mother to the little girl.

13. And Ernestine had, moreover, the satisfaction of aiding her father to rise in the world, so that he became the King's chief gardener. The King did not forget her, but had her well educated at his own expense. As for the two pages, she was indirectly the means of doing them good, also; for, ashamed of their bad reading, they commenced studying in earnest, till they overcame the faults that had offended the King. Both finally rose to distinction, one as a lawyer, and the other as a statesman; and they owed their advancement in life chiefly to their good elocution.

DEFINITIONS:--1. Pe-tĭ´tion, a formal request. 3. Ar-tĭc´ū-lāte, to utter the elementary sounds. Mŏd´u-lāte, to vary or inflect. Mo-nŏt´o-ny, lack of variety. 4. Af-fōot´ed, unnatural and silly. 9. Draft´ed, selected by lot. 10. con-cīse´ brief and full of meaning. 11. Dis-chärge´, release. Dĭc´tāte, to utter so that another may write down. 12. Dis-tĭnc´tion, honorable and notable position. Expręss´, to make known the feelings of.

NOTES--Frederick II of Prussia (b.1712, d. 1786), or Frederick the Great, as he was called, was one of the greatest of German rulers. He was distinguished for his military exploits, for his wise and just government, and for his literary attainments. He wrote many able works in the French language. Many pleasant anecdotes are told of this king, of which the one given in the lesson is a fair sample.

This then, is what it felt like to be immigrant, ignorant of the society's approved forms of its language.

But the problem had greater political and social implications.

Richard Hofstadter, a young American historian, has studied this problem. In his book, The Age of Reform, he notes that:

NOTE: Read or distribute appropriate sections from R. Hofstadter. The Age of Reform. New York: Vintage, 1955; pp. 95, 134, 176, 181.

REVIEW DISCUSSION QUESTION: Can you find any illustrations in the Steiner excerpt of what Hofstadter is saying? Vice versa?

TRANSITION LECTURE: While McGuffey's reader represents one development of language study during the late 19th century, a development that is in some ways particularly "American," some American scholars and many Europeans were engaged in developing further "linguistic science." For these men the study of language had in the past been a science, but one which was marred by the same failings that marred early natural science. Ptolemy had been wrong and so had Dionysius Thrax because, as William Dwight Whitney put it, the early students of language were operating with

> "...a paucity of observed facts...," and they had "...no sufficient collection and classification of phenomena, to serve, as the basis of inductive reasoning, for the establishment of sound methods and the elaboration of true results; and along with this and partly in consequence of it, prejudice and assumption had usurped the place of induction."

NOTE: From W. D. Whitney. Language and the Study of Language. New York: Scribners, 1867; p. 2.

While we cannot trace the development of this "scientific" language study in the 19th century in detail, we have already noted that it closely paralled developments in the natural sciences, particularly in biology and other "life sciences." In fact, we might compare the words of Whitney discussing the emergence of linguistic science with those of Darwin discussing the new purposes of biological classification.

NOTE: Distribute or read aloud Excerpts #6 and #7.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. What are the similarities in method and concern indicated by these statements and those we read earlier?

   (Tracing family resemblances, geneologies, patterns of developments, growth, evolution.)

SAMPLE LECTURE:

The concerns which Whitney's words illustrate led to the development of a linguistic science which sought to collect and classify languages of all types, an attempt that resembles the biologist's attempt to collect and classify specimens of animals and plants, in many respects. This attempt produced what came to be known in the first half of the 20th century as "structural linguistics." The structuralists and structural grammarians were interested in discovering and recording the minute differences between various languages and various dialects of the same language.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

2. How does this compare to what biologists do?

   (They record and discover minute differences between various genus and species of plants and animals.)

To be read aloud or distributed

Our classifications will come to be, as far as they can be so made, genealogies; and will then truly give what maybe called the plan of creation. The rules for classifying will no doubt become simpler when we have a definite object in view. We possess no pedigrees or armorial bearings; and we have to discover and trace the many diverging lines of descent in our natural genealogies, by characters of any kind which have long been inherited. Rudimentary organs will speak infallibly with respect to the nature of long lost structures. Species and groups of species which are called aberrant, and which may fancifully be called living fossils, will aid us in forming a picture of the ancient forms of life. Embryology will often reveal to us the structure, in some degree obscured, of the prototypes of each great class.

When we can feel assured that all the individuals of the same species, and all the closely allied species of most genera, have within a not very remote period descended from one parent, and have migrated from some one birth-place; and when we better know the many means of migration, then, by the light which geology now throws, and will continue to throw, on former changes of climate and of the level of the land, we shall surely be enabled to trace in an admirable manner the former migrations of the inhabitants of the whole world. Even at present, by comparing the differences between the inhabitants of the sea on the opposite sides of a continent, and the nature of the various inhabitants on that continent in relation to their apparent means of immigration, some light can be thrown on ancient geography.

From C. Darwin. The Origin of Species. London: Appleton, 1882.

The restless and penetrating spirit of investigation, finally, of the nineteenth century, with its insatiable appetite for facts, its tendency to induction, and its practical recognition of the unity of human interests, and of the absolute value of all means of knowledge respecting human conditions and history, has brought about as rapid a development in linguistic study as in the kindred branches of physical study to which we have already referred. The truth being once recognized that no dialect, however rude and humble, is without worth, or without a bearing upon the understanding of even the most polished and cultivated tongues, all that followed was a matter of course. Linguistic material was gathered in from every quarter, literary, commercial, and philanthropic activity conbining to facilitate its collection and thorough examination. Ancient records were brought to light and deciphered; new languages were languages were dragged from obscurity and made accessible to study.

The recognition, not long to be deferred when once attention was turned in the right direction, of the special relationship of the principal languages of south-western Asia--the establishment of the Indo-European family of languages--was the turning-point in this history, the true beginning of linguistic science. The great mass of dialects of the family, descendants of a common parent, covering a period of four thousand years with their converging lines of development supplied just the ground which the science needed to grow up upon, working out its methods, getting fully into view its ends, and devising the means of their attainment. The true mode of fruitful investigation was discovered; it appeared that a wide and searching comparison of kindred idioms was the way in which to trace out their history, and arrive at a real comprehension of the life and growth of language. Comparative philology, then, became the hand-maid of ethnology and history, the forerunner and founder of the science of human speech.

3. What is the method of the biologist in classifying the animals and plants?

   (He collects samples or specimens, examines closely all of the various parts of the animal or plant, notes the features which are similar and dissimilar, and, on the basis of these observations, classifies the samples.)

4. What do you suppose the method of the structural linguist is?

   (Essentially the same)

NOTE: Students could be referred to pages 20-30 of PE Unit 703. Some of the work of the structuralists is treated in these pages.

We could spend a great deal of time discussing the particulars and applications of the structuralist's method and what it shows us about the language, but you will discover more about this at another time. For the present, we'll be satisfied with a good answer to these questions.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

5. What does the similarity between the biologist's method and the structural linguist's method mean to us in terms of what we've been discussing?

   (We can again see that the student of language looks at language with a perspective related to the epoch in which he lives.)

6. What sort of a grammar do you suppose these men would develop? Would it be similar to the McGuffey version of grammar?

   (No. It would attempt to be as accurate as possible in listing all the peculiarities of a language. It would be descriptive.)

ACTIVITY:

Have groups of students examine linguistic geographies and genealogies while other groups examine biological classifications. The aid of the biology teacher could be enlisted here. A series of reports or a general discussion could be used to reveal the similarities in methods and purposes.

TRANSITION:

Since the end of World War II, 20th century linguists have taken a greater interest in similarities between all languages, in those things which make all languages, languages. The reasons for this change in concern are numerous, but at least two developments are worthy of special note. As a result of both of the wars and of improvements in communication systems and transportation systems, contacts between peoples speaking different languages increased greatly. This increased contact increased the demand for methods of rapidly translating communications from one language to any number of other languages and vice versa. In addition, the rapid development of the computer which followed World War II provided a machine which, it seemed, might be used to solve a great many problems having to do with communication, including the problems of translation. The early 20th century linguist had provided us with a painstaking description of languages, with descriptive grammars, but these new needs seemed to demand another approach. The question was what do we have to know about languages to get a computer to translate them for us.

NOTE: Distribute Excerpt #8

The short selection I am passsing out gives us some hint about what we needed, about the kind of grammar that would be necessary to enable the machine to translate. Try to think about what we'd have to tell the computer about languages to get it to translate for us as you read this selection.

On Using a Computer
by Robert S. Wachal

To be read by
students.

It may seem strange to begin an article such as this by debunking the computer but unfortunately these machines come in two kinds. First of all there is the real computer, which is a gigantic and dynamic tabula rosa, a sort of high-speed, tireless idiot with a big memory and not a jot of common sense. Then there is the computer of journalisitic myth, an nth power Einstein capable of doing everything from turning out poetry to predicting election results accurately--a super Literary Digest served by slaves who keep its lights flashing, its dials quivering ecstatically and its voracious maw filled with unfolded, unspindled and unmutilated punched cards.

We may as well begin, then, by clearing up several possible misapprehensions. First of all, no mathematical background is necessary either to prepare material for a computer or to operate it. Secondly, it is not necessary nor often even possible to directly operate the computer. Such work can be hired out if desired, and unless the computer is a relatively small one (say an IBM 650 or 1620), one may consider himself lucky if he sees more of the machine than a glimpse through an observation window will allow. One gets his closest contact with a large computer when he hands a deck of punched cards to a human clerk. And finally, computers do not, in most peoples' concept of the word, think. If a computer composes poetry, analyzes style, detects literary influence, and referees authorship disputes, it does so in a highly metaphoric sense. That is, some human agent with insight, imagination, ingenuity and a great amount of time has first determined a completely specified procedure (called an algorithm) for doing part of a complex job. That procedure, broken down into steps of staggering simplicity, is coded into a special, but usually non-mathematical language and the resulting program is then communicated to a computer, which quickly, accurately, tirelessly, and insensibly executes thousands of times over the series of routine chores given it. It then communicates the results of its drudgery back to the human, who interprets these results with insight, imagination, ingenuity, and, if he has done his original job well, in a small amount of time.

The major difficulty in using a computer is not the communication process as such but the reduction of the problem to the level on which the computer operates.

DISCUSSION:

The word is not in most desk or school dictionaries. Webster's Third International contains an unspecialized definition. Most references make it an alternate form of "algorism" which simply means "arithmetic."

NOTE: Students should be referred to Unit 803 where this sorting procedure is described in detail.

1. Define "tabula rasa."

   (Clean slate. Open mind.)

2. Define "algorithm."

   (Wachal: "completely specified procedure." Elementary arithmetic: a procedure which provides a check that "proves" the solution is right. Mathematics Dictionary: "Some special process of solving a certain type of problem.

3. Mr. Wachal goes on to explain in detail the kind of sorting procedure a computer goes through. Recall how this sorting process was carried out in Unit 803 Syntactic Relations.

   (Review - Each scrap of information must be listed separately and coded.)

4. What would be involved in "reducing the problem to the level on which the computer operates," in machine translation?

   (It will be necessary to give the computer instructions which tell it how to recognize and produce the sentences of a language. In other words, the algorithms of languages would have to be worked out.)

At his point we don't need to speculate in a more particular way about the particular rules we'd have to give the machine, but I think you can see that we need more than a description of the language, more than a list of all the sentences that have ever been uttered in the language. We need a grammar that can generate or produce the sentences of the language. Paul Roberts, a grammarian, who began as a structural grammarian, describes this new grammar in these terms.

NOTE: Distribute or read aloud sections from pp. 1 and 2 of P. Roberts. English Sentences. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World; 1962.

DISCUSSION:

1. What attitudes and assumptions does Roberts express which would affect the manner in which he would organize statements about language?

   (He wants to produce language; therefore he will try to present an orderly set of rules that will do what native speakers do; namely, produce the sentences of the language.)

Let's examine the problem which the grammarian sets for himself when he undertakes to develop a productive grammar.

NOTE: Distribute or read aloud the section beginning "Rhythm has long seemed..." and ending, "It is a good exercise for a writer," p. 79; and "If I can avoid it..." to "...said emphatically," p. 82 of J. R. Adams. Sparks Off My Anvil. New York: Harper, 1958.

DISCUSSION:

1. Read No. 128 from Adams carefully. How effective is this "description" of rhythm for a writer who would wish to produce rhythmic sentences?

   (Probably not very effective. It is not explicit and it uses words that it does not define or explain. There is no formula. There is an assumption that the reader knows, for example, what "scannable verse" is.

2. Read No. 137. Is this direction more explicit?

   (Yes. Exact numbers are given.)

3. Will following these directions as they stand guarantee good headlines?

   (No. To illustrate, take a sentence, or a 10-word headline, chop off either end or the middle, omit phrases, etc., and demonstrate that sentence sense, careful deletion, substitution, reordering of syntax, etc., are necessary, plus an idea of what in the article needs emphasis.)

4. As "grammars" of rhythmic sentences and headlines are these excerpts scientific?
   (No. They are not explicit enough.)

5. Are they productive?
   (Yes, since they are concerned with production of utterances rather than with analysis.)

6. Are they trustworthy productive procedures?

   (No. They are not scientifically explicit and, therefore, they will produce utterances which are not desired. There aren't enough restrictions for a computer; therefore, to use them you must supply many restrictions from a background of skills and knowledge which are not specified, which have no algorithms given.)

Now let's examine a more precise attempt to develop a productive grammar. This new grammar is called a transformational grammar, since it attempts to specify rules of "transformation" which produce all sentences of the language from a few basic sentence patterns.

NOTE: Distribute pp. 5-8 E. Back. An Introduction to Transformational Grammars.

NOTE: For students who have not had 7th and 8th grade units on transformational grammar, Units 704, 705, 803 and 804 of the material in Bach will be too difficult. Materials contained in these units will illustrate these same points and might prove more useful in illustrating the generative transformational approach.

NOTE: These paraphrases of Bach should be arrived at through discussion.

Let us now review what comprises a transformational grammar.

1. It is the study of systems of linguistic description which specify the rules which produce the well-formed sentences of a language.

2. It will assign structural descriptions to such specified sentences.

3. IN ORDER TO DO THIS, STATEMENTS CALLED TRANSFORMS ARE NECESSARY.

   In other words, transformations are needed in order to build efficient sentence-specifying theories and to provide the structural descriptions that will account for many facts like those illustrated above.

Since we're not interested in developing the particulars of transformational grammar at this point, we can turn again to the question of the relation of the grammarian's study to the other kinds of thought that surround that study, to the ways of looking at the world that are related to the ways we look at language. In discussing

the structural grammarians, we noted that their method involved describing the pecularities of each language and of each variety of a language.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. Remembering that the transformationalist set himself the task of producing a grammar for machine translation, what do you suppose he would be interested in in addition to the particular differences between languages?

   (The general similarities between languages.)

2. Why?

   (Because these similarities would enable him to specify algorithms that could guide the machine in the task of translating.)

3. Would the transformational grammarian be more interested in describing particular linguistic events in detail or in stating general rules that covered almost all situations?

   (The latter.)

4. What would be the very best sort of rule he could formulate?

   (A rule productive in all languages.)

Now let us ask ourselves if only the transormational grammarian is interested in such broad or general rules. When we do I think we can again see that man's study of himself and his world as it has developed in the 20th century has led to the attempt to formulate more and more general rules in almost all areas. Physics provides perhaps the clearest example of this tendency. Let us examine the work of one of our greatest physicists, Albert Einstein, and discuss his attempt to accomplish this goal.

NOTE: Distribute or read aloud pp. 13-18, L. Barnett. The Universe and Dr. Einstein. New York: Mentor; 1952.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. What does Dr. Einstein hope his "Unified Field Theory" will accomplish?

   (Explaining all physical events in terms of one theory)

2. What does the writer of this selection point out as a strange outcome of this attempt to "explain?"

   (In a sense the "explanation" really doesn't explain. It ends by creating a world that doesn't "really exist." The physicist in the end can't quite explain how things happened; he can simply "tell all that there is to be told."

3. How is this related to the work being done by the transformational grammarians?

   (They too seek to develop a single theory to account for all languages, but in so doing "explain" nothing about how particular language events work.)

Perhaps this will be clearer if we examine a statement of one of the most prominent of these new grammarians, Noam Chomsky.

NOTE: Distribute or read aloud the section beginning "Linguistic theory is concerned...," and ending "...other complex phenomena," pp. 3 and 4 of N. Chomsky. Aspects of the Theory of Syntax. Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1965.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. Do you think Chomsky's ideal speaker and situation could exist?
   (no)

2. Why then is he interested in defining linguistic theory in these terms?

   (Because, in order to achieve the level of generality needed to build an adequate theory for all languages, the particularities must be ignored.)

3. Does this mean that such a grammar is "impractical?"

   (No. Such a grammar may yield practical results, such as machine translation.)

4. Will this grammar teach you and I how to speak our language or other languages?

(No. It will prescribe no particular rules for particular situations. It will only explain what we do when we know a language .)

SUMMARY: In other words, transformational grammar, to paraphrase the quotation from Bertrand Russell we just read, will help us to understand that language is not simply a thing to be classified but a way in which things behave. And, we might add, when we have told how people behave when they use language, and under what cirumstances they use a language, we have told all there is to tell. In a sense, the transformational grammarian, then, follows the same course as did Dionysius Thrax. His grammar attempts to "explain" language as Einstein "explains" the universe. We no longer us Ptolemy's theories to explain the universe, and we no longer accept Thrax's Greek grammar as an explanation of all language.

APPENDIX:

CULMINATING ACTIVITIES

1. Grammar has been studied in the schools since the time of Dionysius Thrax, whom we discussed in the first part of this unit. In the following activity we are going to examine statements from grammar textbooks and textbook writers from different periods in an attempt to see whether the aims and methods of grammar study have changed.

One of the most recent writers of grammar textbooks, Paul Roberts, wrote the following in 1954:

Understanding Grammar, (New York: Harper & Bros.), 1954, pp. 5-6.

"We must remember that grammar is a description of how things are said, not of how they should be said. Most English grammars, including this one, describe how things are said by the educated, but of course it would be possible to describe how things are said by the uneducated or by the semi-educated...Consequently, grammar books cannot properly tell us, for example, that it is right to say "He doesn't" and wrong to say "He don't." They can only report that educated people in American commonly say "He doesn't" and avoid "He don't." The student may decide for himself which is correct.

Not all grammar textbook writers, whether they lived in the past or in the present, agree with Roberts.

Teacher may want to have the students select two or three only.

Your job is to examine the statements and exercises from grammar books which have been printed below, and decide whether or not Roberts would agree with their attitudes toward language study. After each excerpt which your teacher has asked you to examine, write a brief paragraph supporting your conclusion with specific examples. What are the assumptions each is making? You may want to estimate when you think the writer lived. (Teacher can inform them later and discuss retention of 18th century prescriptivism to the present day by many grammar book writers.)

Howard R. Driggs, Our Living Language, Lincoln, Chicago, Dallas: University Publishing Company, 1921.

(a) "It is some of that same pride that I would waken, if I could, in the boys and girls of this country. If they could be led to read appreciatively the best things in our living literature, and trained to use with proper pride the c ean, strong forms in our living language, the battle for better speech would be won."

But just how can this desirable result be achieved?

First find the mistakes. Next create popular sentiment in favor of correct speech; and finally drill, drill, drill, on right forms until proper use is made second nature with the pupils.

Stoddard, Bailey, Lewis, Junior English Two, New York: American Book Company, 1945. p. 216.

(b) USING WHO AND WHOM CORRECTLY

Many persons find it difficult to tell whether to use who or whom in a sentence. If you will remember that who is always used in the nominative case and whom in the objective case, you will have no trouble.

Memorize these three sentences. They will help you to use who and whom correctly.

1. Ralph knew who had written the mystery story.
2. He knew whom he had chosen for it.
3. He knew to whom he had assigned it.

H. C. Wyld, Elementary Lessons in English Grammar (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1925), p. 12.

(c) "A Grammar book does not attempt to teach people how they ought to speak, but on the contrary, unless it is a very bad or a very old work it merely states how, as a matter of fact, certain people do speak at the time at which it is written."

Brown, Goold, Grammar of English Grammars (New York 1851), p. 86.

(d) "Hence the need that an able and discreet grammarian should now and then appear, who with skillful hand can effect those corrections whihc a change of fashion or the ignorance of authors may have made necessary."

William Holmes McGuffey, McGuffey's Fifth Reader, p. 26.

(e) Remark 2--In all cases of this kind these sounds are omitted, in the first instance, merely because they are difficult, and require some care and attention for their utterance, although after a while it becomes a habit. The only remedy is to devote that care and attention which may be necessary. There is no other difficulty, unless there should be a defect in the organs of speech, which is not often the case.

(f) (continued)

Rule V. -- Avoid blending syllables which belong to different words.

Examples

Incorrect	Correct
He ga-zd upon.	He gased upon.
Here res tsis sed.	Here rests his head.
Whattis sis sname?	What is his name?
For ranninstantush.	For an instant hush.
Ther ris sa clam.	There is a calm.
For tho stha tweep.	For those that weep.
God sglorou simage.	God's glorious image.

(g) OUR FORGETFUL MENTORS

Edward Frank Allen,
How to Write and Speak Effective English,
New Yorker Magazine,
May 15, 1965, p. 61
The World Publishing Co.

Perfect is an adjective that should not be compared. If anything is perfect, it is finished, complete. AVOID saying more perfect or most perfect. The same warning applied to other adjectives of which there cannot, logically, be any variable degree. Circular is one. If a thing is circular, it is in the shape of a circle, and cannot be more or less so. See unique.

DIRECTIONS: Below are three quotations dealing with grammar. Read them, and write a paragraph comparing the attitudes. Include examples from the statements to support your conclusions. Here are some questions to consider before you begin to write:

1. What seems to be the job of the grammarian, according to each writer?
2. What is the attitude of each toward "correctness?"
3. What is the attitude toward change in language?
4. Which writers sound prescriptive? Which descriptive? Why?
5. Each writer seems to reflect the views of which periods we have studied?

TEACHER REFERENCE:

Otto Jespersen, A Modern English Grammar (Heidelber, 1909), I, Preface.

I. "It has been my endeavor in this work to represent English grammar not as a set of stiff dogmatic precepts, according to which some things are correct and others absolutely wrong, but as something living and developing under continual fluctuations and undulations, something that is founded on the past and prepares the way for the future, something that is not always consistent or perfect, but progressing and perfectible--in one word, human."

Goold Brown, Grammar of English Grammars (New York, 1851), p. 86.

II. "Hence the need that an able and discreet grammarian should now and then appear, who with skillful hand can effect those corrections which a change of fashion or the ignorance of authors may have made necessary."

Gratten and Gurrey, Our Living Language (London, Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1925), p. 25.

III. "The grammar of a language is not a list of rules imposed upon its speakers by scholastic authorities, but is a scientific record of the actual phenomena of that language, written and spoken. If any community habitually uses certain forms of speech, these forms are part of the grammar of the speech of that community.

C. In a short essay defend:
(a) Johnson's dictionary from the point of view of his age.
(b) McGuffey's attempt to correct the speech of children from the point of view of a Victorian.

D. You have undoubtedly heard the term "prescription" in a medical context as well as a grammatical context. Write a brief essay (satirical, perhaps) pointing out parallels between prescription in medicine and prescription in grammar. It will help you to begin with a definition of "medical prescription." Then consider who is writing it, how many are involved in the decision, the nature of the people who need it, etc.

E. Defend or support the following statements on the basis of your own attitudes toward language and utilizing information you have learned from this unit:

CULTIVATED SPEECH*

Wallace Rice

"... nobody in American has a national reputation for speaking good, cultivated English of the variety common in the Middle West. Such reputations as we have for speaking good English of any sort are fairly limited to our best actors and actresses, and their language is the Cosmopolitan English recognized as "good" wherever English is spoken and too often thought "affected," "snobbish," and other disagreeable things hereabouts."

HAS THE BELL RANG*

Jessie B. Souther

"Just at this period of development, when his mind is very susceptible to to outside influence and to hero-worship, the pupil is assigned Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn as outside reading and, in many instances, as required reading. Huck Finn takes extreme liberties with v verbs; he says "I have went" and "I done"; he ignores "sit" and allows "set" to fulfil all the requirements. "The double negative prevails and is often very conspicuous as in the sentence, 'Nobody don't have to pay.'" The comic section of the Sunday daily is a part of the breakfast menu. It would be comical indeed if the Katzenjammer should concoct in correct English their so-called mischievous deeds. Underlying these associations and influences is the innate slovenliness of American speech.

*THE ENGLISH JOURNAL, Vol. XVII, 1928. January -- December
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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS-ACTIVITIES-(?)

There are, at present, electronic devices which can "listen" to the human voices and react in some fashion to what is said. Serious speculators about the future envision the coupling of this type of device to computers that will be able to fulfill vocal commands, supply information and consolidate, in some meaningful way, the information it "hears." This would mean that you might call the super-market and have a computer "listen" to your order. It would then fill the order, determine where it was to be sent and then "call" your bank and "discuss" with another computer the matter of payment. The computer at your bank would have been "told" by your employer's computer how much money you had earned and the bank computer would deduct the grocery payment and send you a notice of the transaction.

Supposing that some of this should actually occur, how would you answer the following questions?

1. What things would a computer have to know in order to listen to and understand language? (lexicon - rules of syntax)
2. Suppose the computer did not "know" a word you might use. What would it most likely be programmed to do?
   (ask for restatement)
3. What sort of grammar would be needed by the computer?
   (a highly systematic and particularly thorough one)
4. How well would the grammars of various periods suit the computer? How about Thrax? What about the Latin grammar of the 18th century? (they would not operate too well for this purpose)
5. How would the purposes of a computer grammar and the Latin grammar of the 18th century be different? (work to one descriptive-one prescriptive in purpose)

Unit 903 Review	Review Sheet VII/VIII
1. Aristotle	assumption purpose method
2. Thrax	assumption purpose method
3. Latins	assumptions purpose method
4. 18th century	assumption purpose method
5. 19th century	assumption method purpose

6. 20th century Structural	assumption method purpose
7. 20th century Transformat-ional	assumption method purpose

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